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For Immediate Release

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Immigrant and Working Families Honor a Legacy of Justice: Continue the Fight Against Deportations

ALBUQUERQUE, NM. The following statement is from our worker's justice and civil rights community organizer and a DACAmented youth leader, Marian Méndez-Cera:

“On Saturday, April 1st, El CENTRO joins the César Chávez March, to honor the legacy of justice in solidarity with communities of colors, and to send the message that immigrant communities are here to stay. Immigrant workers are the backbone of the global economy, yet are often the workers that face the most exploitation in the workplace.

According to a study done by Somos Un Pueblo Unido in 2013 about Mexican immigrant workers and wage theft in New Mexico: 27.22% had experienced at least one instance of wage theft and 18% experienced abuse in their workplace. Wage theft is not limited to undocumented immigrants. Violating labor rights harms local economy & impacts workers from every background. Because of this, immigrants, workers, women, people of color, LGBTQ communities, Muslims, and allies unite to send a message that there will be an unprecedented opposition to hatred and racism. We need to create alliances with other minorities to fight together.

We are here to honor a legacy of justice to demonstrate the principles and values of our community look. Moreover, to show the unity of our beautiful, diverse community. We must highlight the many contributions immigrants have in this nation. We are mothers, taxpayers, neighbors, workers who clean your homes, who take care of your parents and children, who work in the oil fields and the dairies. We all help grow the nation's economy. We are proud of New Mexico's history of resistance. As a state, we rejected Trump in the elections. We successfully rejected Susana Martínez's anti-immigrant platform. We reject Mayor Berry's anti-sanctuary platform and his willingness to implement Trump-like deportation programs with ICE at the Prisoner Transport Center, in essence trampling on the constitution, criminalizing our community, and fomenting devastating family separation. We will continue to build the legacy of fighting for laws that integrate immigrants into the mainstream.

We will use everything at our disposal including the strengthening of local immigrant friendly policies at the city and county level, strategic litigation, and direct action organizing to fight back against Trump's deportation machine and agenda of hate. We call on others in our community to not let fear be an impediment to join the movement and fight back. We also call on allies to not remain silent, to stand by our community, and to educate others that immigrants are hard workers and that we are here to stay!”

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**El CENTRO de Igualdad y Derechos is a grassroots, immigrants' rights and workers' justice organization based in Albuquerque with over 3000 members.*